that has been put on the property book since the previous month and reconciles all adjustment documents with the new hand receipt and the previous month's hand receipt.

• Ensure that all sub-receipts are updated.

• Prepare a Memorandum for Record stating that the monthly sensitive item inventory, 10-percent inventory, and hand receipt reconciliation were conducted and by whom. List any deficiencies discovered and the corrective action taken.

Commodity Area Chiefs and Platoon Sergeants:

• Ensure that the published inventory schedule is adhered to.

• Lay out all equipment for the company commander's inspection. Hand receipts will not count for property; a physical inventory of the equipment must be done.

• Ensure that all hand receipts are on hand with the appropriate adjustment documents.

Platoon Leaders:

• Ensure that the sensitive item inventory and the hand receipt reconciliation are done according to the schedule the XO has provided. Complete inventories not later than the 21st of each month.

• Brief the company commander on findings.

When the entire chain of command is involved in the inventory, everyone becomes interested in property accountability. This process also adds to the professional development of the junior leaders because it exposes them to the intricacies of the unit supply system. For the commander, it virtually eliminates accountability problems within the company.

Captain Robert E. Milani commanded a company in the 1st Battalion, 503d Infantry in Korea and previously served as the S-4, 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry in Hawaii. He is now serving with the 3d Infantry Regiment at Fort Myer. He is a 1983 ROTC graduate of Old Dominion University.

Search and Attack

CAPTAIN KEVIN J. DOUGHERTY

There are two techniques for conducting a movement to contact — the conventional technique of movement to contact and the search and attack. During the low intensity conflict (LIC) phase at the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC), the opposing force (OPFOR) is dispersed throughout the zone and, initially at least, his weaknesses are unknown. In this situation, the search and attack is the more appropriate technique.

While the search and attack technique is the doctrinally correct means of conducting operations at the JRTC, its decentralized nature places many unexpected demands on a commander and a unit. For example, a company commander cannot use the same approach to conduct a search and attack that he would use for the conventional technique. Because much home station training focuses on the conventional technique, though, many units are not well-rehearsed on the search and attack technique, and this shows when they try it out at the JRTC. The repeated success of the OPFOR is further proof of this.

A company commander can anticipate many of the challenges of a search and attack operation by preparing a detailed and thorough operations order that addresses the considerations of METT-T (mission, enemy, terrain, troops, and time) for the particular operation.

Of great importance is the intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) to help identify named areas of interest (NAIs) where some OPFOR action is expected. The NAIs must focus on the OPFOR, not merely on a recognizable piece of terrain that is of little value except as a navigational aid. And once NAIs are identified, they must be observed. This will help confirm or deny the IPB. Remarkably, many NAIs are merely identified and never placed under observation. A good way to avoid this oversight is an NAI matrix that assigns the responsibility for each NAI to a specific unit.

A detailed terrain analysis is even more fundamental to a search and attack than it is to other operations, because the OPFOR is dispersed and must be found. The commander will not usually have the time or the resources to conduct a police-call sweep of his entire zone and will have to use terrain analysis to focus his search efforts. By determining the key terrain and the avenues of approach, he can direct his search at likely OPFOR locations instead of walking haphazardly through the woods hoping for a chance contact.

Because the terrain is so important, subordinate leaders cannot rely upon an analysis from their higher headquarters for their particular zones. Rather, they must refine any analysis they receive to make it appropriate by using the factors of OCOKA (observation and fields of

fire, cover and concealment, obstacles and movement, key terrain, and avenues of approach). Thus, if a squad leader's terrain analysis is exactly the same as his company commander's (as it often is), that squad leader has obviously not taken the time to study his zone thoroughly for himself.

The commander must not only identify OPFOR capabilities and courses of action, he must also wargame the actions he will take to counter or nullify the OPFOR's plan. For example, the fact that the OPFOR is operating in small dispersed elements requires that a search be detailed and systematic. Locating two-or-three-man teams is far different from trying to find a company assembly area.

Because an OPFOR commander will usually make contact only on his own terms, the friendly force should know that if the OPFOR does attack, the OPFOR commander believes he has the upper hand. This should give the friendly commander an idea of the size of the element he is facing, for if the OPFOR commander does not think he has the advantage, he will break contact before becoming decisively engaged. If that should come to pass, the friendly commander must then have a responsive consolidation effort to fix the OPFOR element before it can escape.

Knowing something about the OPFOR's ability or inability to mass, the friendly commander will also know how quickly he must react to maintain superior combat power. Too, if the OPFOR has the ability to use indirect fire and snipers, the friendly commander must rehearse the SOPs that apply and may initially designate the sniper-killer teams referenced in them. The OPFOR's use of booby traps necessitates dispersed movement and implies a clearing mission for the supporting engineers.

In most of the JRTC LIC scenarios, there is no armor threat, and this frees the Dragon gunners for other tasks. But even if the Dragon rounds themselves are not needed, the commander should consider using the Dragons' AN/TAS-5 night observation devices from static positions. Finally, the OPFOR's reliance on caches for resupply should help focus the search effort. The location of a cache site goes a long way toward narrowing the OPFOR's main area of operations.

Obviously, a mere laundry list of OPFOR capabilities is of marginal value. Some friendly action must be taken to exploit OPFOR weaknesses and negate OPFOR strengths. Only in this way will the friendly force maintain the initiative, and this is the reason why a commander must wargame his actions.

ADJACENT UNITS

The most critical element to be covered in the estimate of the friendly situation may be the locations and actions of adjacent units. Since a search and attack is made up of multiple, coordinated patrols, each patrol must know where the others are. Obviously, this knowledge helps prevent fratricide as well as duplication of effort. Even more important, it lets each patrol know where it can get help during OPFOR contact: A patrol knows how long it must fix the OPFOR before help arrives, which way a withdrawing OPFOR can be pushed so that it will run into a waiting ambush, and who is in a position to move to block any OPFOR reinforcements. It is this knowledge of the friendly situation that separates a battalion search and attack from 27 independent squad-sized patrols.

As in the terrain analysis, a mission statement that is not refined at lower levels isn't going to do the job. The battalion may be conducting a search and attack, but the various squads and platoons should be given their own tasks to support this higher mission. Examples of these tasks are area and zone reconnaissance, ambush, surveillance, and security patrols.

Again, a squad leader's mission statement should not be the same as that of the commander. He should conduct his own search and attack by dividing his squad into multiple, coordinated patrols. The failure of junior leaders to recognize this distinction in their restated mission and the failure of higher commanders to assign their subordinates attainable, realistic, and purposeful tasks often result in a disjointed, uncoordinated, individual effort.

The commander's intent and concept of the operation must address the usual three Fs — find, fix, and finish the OPFOR. Too often, though, the plan goes only as far as finding the OPFOR, which makes the operation a search, not a search and attack.

A unit's scheme of maneuver, which begins when it enters the operational zone, can be carried out in one of two ways. Either the company can move in unison to an objective rally point (ORP) within its zone and from there disperse into platoon and squad zones, or the squads and platoons can infiltrate directly into their assigned zones from outside the company zone. (The number and size of the patrols will depend on the size of the zone.) Numerous, smaller patrols, of course, are more appropriate to the decentralized nature of a search and attack operation and also help reduce the damage sometimes caused by the OPFOR's indirect fire.

As in all operations, the company commander should designate a main effort, but this is sometimes hard to do in such a fluid situation. If the IPB indicates that one patrol is more likely to make contact than the others, that patrol therefore is the obvious candidate for the main effort. Otherwise, it is a good idea to assign the main effort to a centrally located patrol.

Merely designating a patrol for the main effort is not enough. Something must be done to strengthen that patrol, and at the same time, to give other patrols supporting tasks. For example, the designated patrol might be given priority of mortar fires, more personnel, or such attachments as engineers or a fire support team.

One of the things that separates the search and attack technique from the conventional movement to contact technique is a degree of control. Because of the decentralized nature of the search and attack, the commander's physical control of the various patrols is next to impossible. Nonetheless, it is the commander who must maintain the big picture of what is going on in his zone,

and he must have a way of controlling the patrols, especially once contact is made.

The beginnings of this control are found in a clear statement of the commander's intent. If the patrol leaders know what the commander is trying to do, they can act accordingly, even if they cannot reach the commander for specific guidance.

A second way of achieving control is to use graphic control measures to facilitate movement, link-up, and consolidation. Unit boundaries are also fundamental to controlling movement. Since these must be recognizable on the ground, such linear features as ridges, creeks, and trails are ideal. When such features are used, however, the commander must be careful to assign specific responsibility for a feature instead of drawing the boundary down the middle and creating a sort of no-man's-land.

Another good control measure is the use of phase lines. By establishing a series of phase lines, the commander can orchestrate his patrols' rates of movement to ensure that they do not get out of supporting range of each other.

Once contact is made, the difficult process of consolidation begins, and preplanned link-up points selectively dispersed throughout the zone will make this process easier. These must be recognizable points, such as hilltops and road junctions. In the heat of an OPFOR contact in which the fixing patrol has a limited ability to do its job, adjacent patrols cannot waste time hunting for each other. The "keep it simple" principle is the best.

Once link-up is accomplished, the concentration plan must be more than "move to the sound of the guns." Unless certain control measures have been established, when a unit comes crashing into the front, it is difficult to tell friendly reinforcements from OPFOR counterattack forces.

One way to avoid this is to concentrate in two steps. The first step is to get the forces into the immediate area so they can influence the fight. This can be done by initially moving to a blocking position along an avenue of approach either for withdrawal or reinforcement but still out of small arms range of the fight. From here the second step is to develop the situation, and this requires coordination. The fixing unit and the maneuver unit must learn each other's exact locations and this can usually be done by radio. If possible, a runner can be sent from the fixing unit to guide in the maneuver unit.

Once this has been accomplished, the two leaders must agree on a plan of attack. The plan can be as simple as, "I will hit their flank from the west. On my signal, shift fires to the east." In daylight, this signal will usually be smoke and, at night, a star cluster. Radio can supplement these visual signals. This type of coordination is not nearly as difficult in the conventional technique since the unit is already consolidated and its flanks are clearly established. When doing a search and attack, therefore, the commander must include added control measures in his operations order (OPORD) to compensate for the initial dispersal of his unit.

ACTIONS ON CONTACT

The crux of the execution paragraph is the "actions on contact" portion — simply stated, the commander must answer the question, "What happens when the OPFOR is found?" He must tell his men what size element should be fixed and what should be destroyed. His basic cutoff for this should be a 3:1 ratio of friendly to opposing forces, but surprise and shock can sometimes offset a deficiency in numbers. If this ratio can be attained by the finding element, the OPFOR should be destroyed. If not, the OPFOR should be fixed by the finding element and consolidation begun.

The final type of contact that should be planned for is the discovery of OPFOR cache points. Usually, units just destroy these and move on, but a better option may be to observe the sites and establish ambushes nearby. The OPFOR element, obviously, will return to the cache sooner or later, and it can then be destroyed or captured. The potential intelligence value of a cache site and its ability to act as bait far outweigh the harm done to the OPFOR by hastily destroying a few supplies. At any rate, the cache can be destroyed any time.

The plan for fires must support the entire zone. Because the patrols are dispersed, concentrating direct firepower in some cases may be too slow. Indirect fires, particularly the company mortars, are responsive enough to fill this time gap until direct firepower can be concentrated. Planned targets will speed the call-for-fire process, but too many only muddy the waters. The target list must be updated as new intelligence is gathered — when a cache site is found, for example, or when a suspected OPFOR location that had been targeted proves to be vacant.

To provide responsive support, the mortar units must be completely aware of the scheme of maneuver, including any changes. They must also have a plan for their own security. Although frequent displacements will help, to be really secure, the mortars may need some augmentation. This augmentation can come from several sources. The mortars can co-locate with and work into the security plan of the command post or the designated reserve, or if there is no armor threat, the Dragon gunners can be attached to the mortars to help out with security.

Finally, as unpalatable as it may be to the commander, some situations may require that an infantry squad be assigned the task of securing the mortars. This is not to say that that squad cannot also patrol, but its patrol plan must include providing the mortars with security. Augmenting the mortars also has some service support benefits (to be discussed later) that may make this a less bitter pill for the commander to swallow. Nonetheless, the security of the mortars cannot be ignored.

When it comes to designating his reserve, a company commander has two choices: He can maintain it at either company or platoon level. The trade-off will be control responsiveness, so the commander will have to look at his METT-T analysis to see which is best. But again, the decentralized nature of

the search and attack will cast a strong vote for a responsive platoon-level reserve.

Finally, and because the LIC phase at the JRTC lasts four or five days, numerous patrol bases are occupied along the way. Unfortunately, planning patrol bases seem to be a lost art, and most are occupied by squads acting on their own. Patrol bases should be planned in advance. The sample annex format found in the Ranger Handbook is still the best guideline.

The biggest headache for units at the JRTC is probably casualty evacuation. Using the conventional technique of movement to contact, most units are used to having the trail unit take charge of casualties and allowing the lead units to keep contact with the OPFOR. Since the company is moving in one column, this process is centralized and easy to control. Usually, only one casualty collection point (CCP), one truck, or one landing zone (LZ) is needed.

The search and attack, however, does not lend itself to this neat method. The dispersal of the patrols, for example, requires that numerous CCPs be established. Getting transportation to all of them is quite a challenge to a light infantry company's limited vehicle capability.

The casualty evacuation plan must therefore be even more of a battalion-driven affair than usual. MILES cards require that "litter urgent" patients be treated in two hours, and "litter priority" patients in four hours. Other wounded personnel die of their wounds unless treated in 24 hours. These rules make units painfully aware of their slow casualty evacuation process. The problem usually is not evacuating a casualty to the company CCP but transporting the casualty from there to the battalion CCP.

The battalion can evacuate casualties by ground or by air. Evacuation by ground requires a secure main supply route (MSR), and a secure MSR results only from conscious effort. If likely MSRs are identified during the planning process, patrols can clear them. The initial security of these MSRs is an appropriate task for infantry squads until they can be relieved by military police units. Too often, though, the search for MSRs is a haphazard one that clears and secures several bits and pieces of a route, but these cannot always be strung together to form an appropriate MSR.

Eventually, the battalion realizes it needs an MSR and then has to backtrack to secure one. It would be simpler to begin this process as soon as the battalion enters its zone, killing two birds with one stone. Although the search for the OPFOR may still be going on, it can be organized in such a way that a cleared MSR is a natural by-product of it.

CASUALTY EVACUATION

Casualty evacuation by air is the only alternative if an MSR has not been secured. This requires a secure LZ and adequate suppression of OPFOR air defense artillery (ADA). With the realistic time limits for treatment established by the MILES cards, air evacuation may be the only means responsive enough to save a soldier, and this responsiveness is dependent upon prior coordination.

Most units, unfortunately, have had it drilled into them that casualty evacuation cannot be allowed to halt the ground tactical plan. They desperately want to avoid halting an entire company while a helicopter is called in for one man, and the frequent result is that the soldier is never evacuated and is recorded as dying of his wounds. An alternative is to make a designated team responsible for securing casualties, giving first aid, and calling for air evacuation. Meanwhile, the rest of the platoon or company can continue with its mission. Units rarely use air evacuation at the JRTC, and it may be part of the answer to the current casualty evacuation problem.

In addition to casualty evacuation, service support must include taking care of the normal classes of supply. Many consumable items such as rations and ammunition need to be resupplied regularly. Link-up times and locations for these supplies should be programmed in advance and made to support the patrol plan. Aerial resupplies can easily be adjusted to this schedule. Another option is to use a cache system like the one the OPFOR uses.

Special consideration must be given to the mortar platoon and its requirement to carry ammunition and equipment. Too often, the simple answer is for the platoon to carry only enough equipment to fire the mortars in the hand-held mode. While this eases the logistical burden, it severely hinders the mortar's ability to support the operation. *(See "The 60mm Mortar: How Good Is It?" by Captain John Spiszer, INFANTRY, May-June 1990, pages 19-21, and "81mm Mortars: The Forgotten Platoon," by Captain Christopher A. Collins, INFANTRY, May-June 1991, pages 33-36.)*

A commander can overcome this problem in several ways. The first is to have every soldier carry a couple of mortar rounds and cache them at ORPs throughout the zone. The mortar elements then rotate through these ORPs. The problem with this system is that it robs the scheme of maneuver of flexibility: To keep the resupply plan intact, the patrols must pass through the planned ORPs, even if they are no longer the most tactically desirable.

Another option is simply to augment the mortar platoon by co-locating it either with the CP or the reserve or by attaching unused Dragon gunners to it. In addition to easing the individual loads, this augmentation will help meet the security requirements previously discussed. If the mortars and the CP are co-located, the commander will certainly avoid the tendency to forget about his indirect fire asset. Again, the final decision will be based on his METT-T analysis.

In addition to locating with the mortars, a company commander has other options for his CP. One is to locate with the reserve, if the reserve is maintained at company level. This will help him maintain control over this unit and allow him to influence the action when the reserve is needed. The final option is to locate the CP with a patrol,

which will allow him to be closer to the action and to lead from the front. If this is done, the commander must resist the temptation to become the leader of that patrol at the expense of leading the rest of the company.

Wherever the commander chooses to place his CP, it must facilitate command and control of the entire zone. Part of this process is dependent on good communications, which again is made more difficult by the unit dispersal that is common to a search and attack. Since the commander will have little physical contact with his patrols, good radio communications are essential, especially when trying to direct a consolidation. Control of the high ground for communication purposes may become necessary, and this, like the MSR, should also be a by-product of the patrol plan. If the high ground is not enough, the radio telephone operators must be prepared to use OE-254 and field expedient antennas, and it may be necessary to coordinate for a battalion retransmission.

Visual signals are also a requirement. The search and attack technique will include numerous link-ups, and recognition signals must be addressed, along with signals for shifting fire during attacks.

Light infantry units have found the search and attack technique the preferred method of conducting movements to contact, and this technique is certainly appropriate to the JRTC. Nonetheless, too many unit SOPs and commanders are still geared to the conventional technique.

A commander must realize that by using the search and attack technique he is conducting a decentralized operation, and that his OPORD will be his last chance to give face-to-face guidance to his command. This guidance must consider the factors of METT-T that are peculiar to the specific operation; it is not just a conventional movement to contact OPORD into which the phrase "search and attack" has been inserted.

Captain Kevin J. Dougherty, a senior observer controller at the Joint Readiness Training Center, previously served with the 101st Airborne Division and the Berlin Brigade. He is a 1983 graduate of the United States Military Academy and has written several articles for publication in various military journals

SWAP SHOP

CROSS-ATTACHMENT COORDINATION

Executing a cross-attachment can be a painful exercise in a battalion or task force. Unless there is a normal association or a detailed standing operating procedure, the cross-attached company team or platoon is usually behind in planning and preparing for an operation when the operation begins.

The following checklist for coordinating a cross-attachment is for a platoon or a company team, and it is not meant to be exhaustive. It can be condensed to a 3 x 5 card or inserted into ST 21-75-2, The Ranger Handbook, under Chapter 3, "Coordination Checklists."

Although some items are common sense and others are not always applicable, this checklist will ensure that some of the most basic but easily forgotten items are not omitted. It is especially helpful when leaders are experiencing sleep deprivation or when subordinate leaders must execute cross-attachments:

1. The cross-attached unit coordinates the following with his losing unit:
   a. Time and place for a link-up with his next supported unit before the cross-attachment execution time.
   b. Frequency and call sign of next supported unit.
2. The cross-attached unit coordinates the following with his gaining unit:
   a. Recognition symbols — vehicle and personnel, both night and day.
   b. Succession of command.
   c. Target list — both artillery and engineer.
   d. Battle drills.
   e. Battle roster.
   f. Class I, III, IV, V, and IX.
   g. Location of combat trains, LRP, UMCP, and AXP.
   h. Signal operating instructions (SOI).
   i. Quartering party procedures
   j. POW handling procedures.
   k. Priority of work.
   l. Sensitive item list.
   m. Graphics.
   n. Quick reaction drills.
   o. Order of march.
   p. Assembly area procedures.
   q. Number and type of vehicles.
   r. Casualty evacuation plan.
   s. Peculiar signs and frequencies — for example, special AJ frequencies, star clusters for lifting and shifting fires.
   t. Stand-to procedures.
   u. Reports — specifically sensitive item reports.
   v. Recovery plan.
   w. Time and place of OPORD, reconnaissance, and rehearsal.

(Submitted by Captain Josef R. Hallatschek, Fort Irwin, California.)